

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated November 18, 2003. Claims 5, 8, 9 and 12 are in the application, with Claim 5 being the sole independent claim. Claim 5 has been amended, and Claim 12 has been newly-added. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

The Office Action Summary indicates that corrected drawings are required. However, corrected drawings were already submitted with the Letter Transmitting Formal Drawings dated April 3, 2003. Acceptance of those drawings is respectfully requested.

Claims 5, 8 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Figure 7 of the subject application in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,987,474 (Yasuhara). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

The present invention concerns an image pickup apparatus which includes a lead of a flexible wiring film, an image pickup element chip electrically connected to the lead at an electrical connection point, and a cover glass for protecting a surface of the image pickup element chip. The lead, the image pickup element chip, and the cover glass are sealed with a sealant in a peripheral portion of the image pickup element chip. A hole is formed in a portion of the lead which is in contact with the sealant and which is between the electrical connection point and an area of the lead bonded to an insulating base film. A part of the hole is positioned outside the cover glass, and the lead has a thickness of not greater than 35 μm .

Thus, according to one feature of the invention, the lead has a thickness of not greater than 35 μm . By virtue of this feature, it is made easier to decrease the

difference in flow rates between sealant flowing on the lead and sealant flowing on other portions, thereby helping to prevent the generation of bubbles on the lead tip.

Yasuhara and Applicant's Figure 7, either alone or in combination, are not seen to teach or suggest at least the foregoing feature.

Yasuhara's multiple lead frame 1 has a thickness of .25 mm. See col. 5, lines 18 and 19 of Yasuhara. As such, a large step shape in the thickness direction of the hole is formed, which would result in a difference in sealant flow rates and the generation of bubbles.

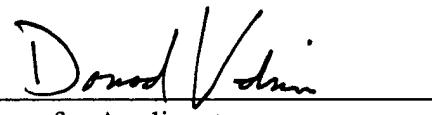
According to another feature of the invention, a hole is formed in a portion of the lead between the electrical connection point and an area of the lead bonded to an insulating base film.

Yasuhara and Applicant's Figure 7, either alone or in combination, also are not seen to disclose this feature.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that this application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office at (202) 721-5477. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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